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Part VI
Human rights and humanitarian affairs

Section 23
Protection of and assistance to refugees

(Programme 21 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001)

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* The present document contains section 23 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001. The complete proposed programme budget will subsequently be issued in final printed form as *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 6* (A/54/6/Rev.1).

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Section 23
Protection of and assistance to refugees

(Programme 21 of the medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001)

Overview

23.1 The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is responsible for the implementation of the programme. The Office was established by the General Assembly in its resolution 319 A (IV) of 3 December 1949 and its statute was approved by the Assembly in resolution 428 (V) of 14 December 1950. Subsequent resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Executive Committee of UNHCR have called on the Office, in the context of its basic mandate, to assist other groups of persons regarded as falling within the competence of the High Commissioner.

23.2 The overall objective of UNHCR is to provide international protection to refugees and to seek durable solutions to refugee problems. UNHCR is required to safeguard the fundamental principles of asylum and non-refoulement and to ensure that the basic rights of refugees are respected and that they are treated in a decent and humane manner. As regards UNHCR assistance activities, the basic provisions of the statute were expanded by the General Assembly in its resolution 832 (IX) of 21 October 1954. The Assembly has also called upon the High Commissioner to provide assistance to returnees, as well as to monitor their safety and well-being on return (resolution 40/118). In addition, on the basis of specific requests from the Secretary-General or the competent principal organs of the United Nations and with the consent of the State concerned, UNHCR provides humanitarian assistance and protection to internally displaced persons (resolution 48/116). In complex humanitarian emergencies, UNHCR, in addition to discharging its particular international protection mandate, also contributes to the provision of humanitarian assistance coordinated by the United Nations Emergency Relief Coordinator according to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991.

23.3 The UNHCR programme of work during the biennium 2000-2001 will focus, in varying and largely unpredictable situations, on the following: (a) the pursuit of comprehensive strategies, in cooperation with States and other organizations, aimed at both mitigating and preventing the causes of forced population displacements, as well as finding solutions to them when they occur; (b) the ongoing development of a legal regime of international protection, in particular through the promotion of accessions to international and regional instruments relating to the status of refugees or otherwise benefiting refugees, the effective implementation of refugee rights and the promotion and dissemination of principles of refugee law and protection principles; (c) the further development of contingency planning, emergency preparedness and response capabilities, in coordination with other organizations, so as to respond effectively and efficiently to situations of forced human displacement; (d) the provision of humanitarian assistance in an environmentally sensitive manner and in a way that it is supportive of and reinforces development initiatives to the extent possible; in addition, a concerted effort will be made to ensure that in the delivery of humanitarian assistance, the particular needs and capacities of refugee women will be taken into account, as well as the special situation of refugee children; and (e) the systematic follow-up to relevant recommendations in the plans of action emanating from recent international conferences.

23.4 The Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees was established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 1166 (XII) of 26 November 1957 to advise the High Commissioner in the exercise of his/her functions and to approve the use of extrabudgetary funds made available to the High Commissioner. The annual cycle of meetings of the Executive Committee consists of one annual plenary session and a number of inter-sessional meetings of a Standing Committee of the Whole. In accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/121 of 9 December 1998, the membership of the Executive Committee was increased from 53 to 54 member countries. Reports on the sessions of the

Executive Committee are submitted to the General Assembly as addenda to the reports of the High Commissioner.

23.5 The estimated extrabudgetary resources amounting to $1,684,378,200 represent 97.3 per cent of the total resources available for this programme. The existing arrangements for intergovernmental review and management of those extrabudgetary funds provide for the Executive Committee of UNHCR to approve annual budgets to govern the use of such extrabudgetary resources.

23.6 The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees provides overall direction, supervision and management of the activities under this programme. The High Commissioner is elected by the General Assembly on the nomination of the Secretary-General. The functions of the High Commissioner are set out in the annex to the statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The High Commissioner is assisted by a Deputy High Commissioner and an Assistant High Commissioner. The Director of International Protection and the Inspector-General also report directly to the High Commissioner.

Table 23.1 **Summary of requirements by programme**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Programme	*1996-1997 expenditures*	*1998-1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000-2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Protection of and assistance to refugees	47 647.5	45 051.0	–	–	45 051.0	599.2	45 650.2
Total	**47 647.5**	**45 051.0**	–	–	**45 051.0**	**599.2**	**45 650.2**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996-1997 expenditures	*1998-1999 estimates*	*Source of funds*	*2000-2001 estimates*
		(a) Services in support of	
		(i) United Nations organizations	
		(ii) Extrabudgetary activities	
		(b) Substantive activities	
2 119 320.3	1 803 855.1	(c) Operational projects	1 684 378.2
2 119 320.3	**1 803 855.1**		**1 684 378.2**
2 166 967.8	**1 848 906.1**		**1 730 028.4**

Table 23.2 **Summary of requirements by object of expenditure**

(Thousands of United States dollars)

(1) *Regular budget*

Object of expenditure	*1996-1997 expenditures*	*1998-1999 appropriations*	*Resource growth*		*Total before recosting*	*Recosting*	*2000-2001 estimates*
			Amount	*Percentage*			
Posts	47 607.6	42 222.6	–	–	42 222.6	548.0	42 770.6
Other staff costs	39.9	1 757.2	–	–	1 757.2	31.8	1 789.0
General operating expenses	–	993.9	–	–	993.9	18.0	1 011.9
Supplies and materials	–	77.3	–	–	77.3	1.4	78.7
Total	**47 647.5**	**45 051.0**	–	–	**45 051.0**	**599.2**	**45 650.2**

(2) *Extrabudgetary resources*

1996-1997 expenditures	1998-1999 estimates	Object of expenditure	2000-2001 estimates
479 197.9	397 720.3	Posts	378 890.6
25 162.5	17 508.4	Other staff costs	15 170.8
3 554.2	3 759.3	Consultants and experts	5 075.6
39 078.5	38 522.3	Travel	35 879.4
8 763.5	20 393.8	Contractual services	29 657.0
81 490.4	82 883.3	General operating expenses	80 167.2
13 112.0	15 993.6	Supplies and materials	15 515.2
33 415.3	29 976.4	Furniture and equipment	28 278.4
1 435 546.0	1 197 097.7	Other expenditure	1 095 744.0
2 119 320.3	**1 803 855.1**	**Total**	**1 684 378.2**
2 166 967.8	**1 848 906.1**	**Total (1) and (2)**	**1 730 028.4**

Table 23.3 **Post requirements**

Organizational unit: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

	Established posts		Temporary posts					
	Regular budget		Regular budget		Extrabudgetary resources		Total	
	1998-1999	2000-2001	1998-1999	2000-2001	1998-1999	2000-2001	1998-1999	2000-2001
Professional category and above								
USG	1	1	–	–	–	–	1	1
ASG	1	1	–	–	1	1	2	2
D-2	2	2	–	–	18	17	20	19
D-1	10	10	–	–	48	51	58	61
P-5	19	19	–	–	134	123	153	142
P-4/3	41	41	–	–	951	739	992	780
P-2/1	15	15	–	–	121	158	136	173
Total	**89**	**89**	**–**	**–**	**1 273**	**1 089**	**1 362**	**1 178**
General Service category								
Principal level	4	4	–	–	47	40	51	44
Other levels	127	127	–	–	259	196	386	323
Total	**131**	**131**	**–**	**–**	**306**	**236**	**437**	**367**
Other categories								
Local level	–	–	–	–	3 400	2 751	3 400	2 751
Field Service	–	–	–	–	77	32	77	32
Total	**–**	**–**	**–**	**–**	**3 477**	**2 783**	**3 477**	**2 783**
Grand total	**220**	**220**	**–**	**–**	**5 056**	**4 108**	**5 276**	**4 328**

Programme of work

23.7 The programme of work is implemented at UNHCR headquarters and in the field through the Executive Office, supported by the heads of the Department of International Protection and the Department of Operations, the Division of Resources Management and the Division of Communications and Information. UNHCR operations are grouped into the following regions: Africa; Europe; the Americas; Asia and the Pacific; Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East; and the former Yugoslavia. In support of those operations, UNHCR has some 290 offices in 124 countries. Country representatives act on behalf of the High Commissioner in all aspects of the Office's activities in the country or countries to which they are accredited.

23.8 Within the programme of work, the estimated percentage distribution of resources among subprogrammes would be as follows:

Subprogramme	*Regular budget*	*Extra-budgetary*
	(percentage)	
1 International protection	1.1	28.6
2 Assistance	98.9	71.4
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**

Expected accomplishments

23.9 At the end of the biennium 2000–2001, the anticipated accomplishments of UNHCR would include: (a) development of strategies, in cooperation with States and other organizations, aimed at mitigating and preventing the causes of forced population displacement; (b) increased accession to international and regional conventions, and improved implementation of refugees' rights; (c) further development of contingency planning, emergency preparedness and response capabilities, in coordination with other organizations, for immediate effective and efficient response to situations of forced human displacement; and (d) reinforcement of development initiatives, to the extent possible, when providing humanitarian assistance in an environmentally sensitive manner, in particular in relation to the needs and capacities of refugee women and the special situation of refugee children.

Subprogramme 1
International protection

23.10 The objectives of this subprogramme are:

(a) To promote further acceptance of the existing international or regional legal instruments and to elaborate new instruments;

(b) To promote the inclusion of provisions favourable to refugees in international and regional instruments and in national legislation;

(c) To explore the development of further measures, consistent with fundamental protection principles reflected in international instruments so as to ensure international protection to all who need it;

(d) To ensure the effective implementation of refugee rights through the widest possible observance by States of internationally accepted standards for the treatment of refugees, especially the fundamental principles of asylum and non-refoulement, and respect for the special protection needs of refugee women and refugee children and adolescents;

(e) To promote further accessions to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;

(f) To promote and disseminate refugee law and protection principles, in particular through training, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other relevant organizations, of governmental and non-governmental officials;

(g) To search for permanent solutions to the problems of refugees, especially through the elaboration of comprehensive and regional approaches for resolving refugee problems.

Outputs

23.11 During the biennium the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing of meetings. Annual sessions of the Executive Committee and two sessions of the Standing Committee of the Whole on international protection issues;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Two issues of *Note on International Protection and of the Annual Theme* and approximately five conference room papers on specific protection topics;

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Recurrent publications. Maintenance and update of the two-volume *Collection of International Instruments and other Legal Texts Concerning Refugees and Displaced Persons*; *Refugee Survey Quarterly*; and one issue of *The State of the World's Refugees*;

(ii) Technical material. Maintenance of some 14 databases known collectively as REFWORLD, which include country reports, case law, legal instruments and legislation. REFWORLD is available over the Internet and on CD-ROM;

(iii) Other services provided. It is estimated that the Office will provide some 7,500 travel documents in the course of the biennium to assist Governments in the implementation of the provision on the rights of travel of refugees as laid down in article 20 of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees. In some countries, the Office also provides assistance for the issuance of refugee identity cards;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) As at 31 December 1998, the number of States that had acceded to the principal legal instruments, the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and/or its 1967 Protocol, stood at 136. UNHCR will continue to work actively to promote further accessions to the various refugee-related legal instruments;

(ii) One of the significant developments in refugee protection in recent years has been a renewed State interest in developing complementary forms of protection, including the tools for such protection. UNHCR is actively engaged in various forums on this subject and will continue formal and informal consultations in the biennium 2000–2001 aimed at ensuring that the needs of all persons who deserve international protection are effectively addressed in this context;

(iii) UNHCR will continue to work for the effective implementation of refugee rights, in particular freedom from arbitrary detention of asylum-seekers worldwide;

(iv) UNHCR will continue to address the particular needs of refugee women and refugee children and adolescents, especially through the dissemination and promotion of related UNHCR guidelines (*Sexual Violence against Refugees: Guidelines on Prevention and Response* (Geneva, 1995); *Refugee Children: Guidelines on Protection and Care* (Geneva, 1994); *Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women* (Geneva, 1994));

(v) In accordance with the conclusion of the Executive Committee at its forty-sixth session, on the prevention and reduction of statelessness and the protection of stateless persons, UNHCR will focus in particular on the promotion of and accession to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness;

(d) *Technical cooperation*

(i) Some 250 training events for government officials and non-governmental implementing partners, with an average number of 20 to 30 participants, are organized annually;

(ii) An annual refugee law course organized with the International Institute of Humanitarian Law, San Remo, Italy, with some 50 participants from 30 countries; and

(iii) Support, at the request of the Government concerned, of national efforts at legal and judicial capacity-building.

Subprogramme 2
Assistance

23.12 UNHCR assistance in response to refugee situations embraces the following: emergency assistance, care and maintenance, local settlement, resettlement and voluntary repatriation supported by reintegration assistance. In the provision of such assistance, UNHCR ensures that assistance, where possible, is delivered in such a way as to involve the recipients. In particular, it should tap the potentialities of refugee women. Where possible, relief assistance should be provided in such a way as to reinforce, rather than undermine, local capacities to cope. Another preoccupation of UNHCR is to ensure that assistance programmes do not interfere with or work against the process of sustainable development. The specific objectives of this subprogramme are:

(a) To provide humanitarian assistance in an environmentally sound manner;

(b) To enhance UNHCR emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, bearing in mind results achieved in strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance by the United Nations pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/56;

(c) To pursue collaborative ventures with agencies having complementary mandates or competencies;

(d) To improve the partnership process with its implementing partners, in particular non-governmental organizations;

(e) To ensure a more effective implementation of its policies relating to refugee women and refugee children and adolescents, even from the early phases of an emergency;

(f) To involve development entities and international financial institutions in elaborating durable solutions to refugee problems.

Outputs

23.13 During the biennium the following outputs will be delivered:

(a) *Servicing of intergovernmental/expert bodies*

(i) Substantive servicing of meetings. Annual session of the Executive Committee; and three sessions of the Standing Committee of the Whole on a range of assistance issues;

(ii) Parliamentary documentation. Two issues of the UNHCR annual programme budget; and some 50 conference room papers on various assistance topics;

(b) *Other substantive activities*

(i) Technical material. Preparation and maintenance of a CD-ROM entitled "UNHCR's Knowledge and Information Management System", which will contain all UNHCR programme and technical guidelines;

(c) *International cooperation and inter-agency coordination and liaison*

(i) In pursuit of a sound environmental approach to the delivery of assistance, UNHCR has developed a set of Environmental Guidelines which reflect the environmental policy adopted by the Executive Committee at its forty-sixth session (1995). The pursuit of such an approach will require close collaboration among UNHCR, national Governments and development and financial institutions;

(ii) UNHCR will contribute, in close coordination with the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to the further enhancement of the United Nations response to complex emergencies;

(iii) UNHCR will place greater emphasis on specific preparedness measures at the country level, in particular through joint contingency planning in-country with operational partners, including provision for the integration of local resources into the planned response mechanisms;

(iv) To ensure improved collaboration and coordination with other related agencies in the discharge of its mandate, UNHCR will review and, where necessary, elaborate memoranda of understanding. Such memoranda will aim at ensuring predictable operational inputs to refugee/returnee programmes by those organizations that reflect their mandates and competencies. The agencies of particular significance to the work of UNHCR include WFP, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNIFEM, WHO, IOM and UNDP;

(v) In relation to its non-governmental partners who provide assistance to refugees, UNHCR will review progress on the Partnership in Action Declaration and Plan of Action (Oslo, 1994). The Office will also aim to involve further its implementing partners, both non-governmental and governmental, in programme planning and to ensure that they receive the appropriate training and support to comply with conditions associated with the implementation of projects on behalf of UNHCR. In addition, UNHCR will improve its procedures to monitor such compliance;

(vi) Relevant policy guidelines have been drawn up to address the specific needs of refugee women and refugee children and adolescents. The challenge for UNHCR is to give effect to those guidelines in its operations. This objective will be pursued, in particular, through the provision of relevant training and related technical support;

(vii) To underpin durable solutions, in particular voluntary repatriations, UNHCR will seek to strengthen linkages between its reintegration assistance and broader development efforts. The Office will work to develop further its relationship with UNDP, the World Bank and other development and financial institutions;

(d) *Technical cooperation*. To ensure effective delivery of its assistance and protection programmes, UNHCR makes an important investment in the training of implementing partners. In a given year, some 1,750 persons from Governments and non-governmental organizations are trained by the Office.

Resource requirements (at current rates)

23.14 In accordance with article 20 of the statute of UNHCR, administrative expenditures of the Office are financed under the regular budget of the United Nations. Unless the General Assembly subsequently decides otherwise, no expenditure other than administrative expenditures relating to the functioning of the Office is borne by the budget of the United Nations, and all other expenditures relating to the activities of UNHCR are financed by voluntary contributions. While the statute does not define what is meant by "administrative

expenditures", the term, based on a definition offered by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in a report submitted to the Assembly at its seventh session (see A/2157, part III), has been interpreted to mean expenses other than operational expenses and the related management costs.

23.15 Following the reduction in the number of posts requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986, discussions took place between UNHCR and the Secretariat that resulted in an agreement that a distinction should be made between operational and non-operational support staff, and that operational support staff, including related costs, should be financed exclusively from the voluntary funds administered by the High Commissioner. Because of the financial constraints in the regular budget, it was further agreed that the voluntary funds would also cover non-operational costs in the field, while the United Nations would meet the costs of non-operational staff at UNHCR headquarters at Geneva. Those proposals, which were approved by the Assembly at its forty-fourth session, resulted in maintaining the number of posts to be financed from the regular budget at 244, with a different distribution among grades and with all posts being located at Geneva instead of being distributed between Geneva and field offices, up to the biennium 1998–1999, when, as a result of the streamlining of the administrative support staff in the Office, the number of posts was reduced to 220.

23.16 During 1993/1994 UNHCR redefined and re-categorized its different types of posts. After extensive discussion with, and endorsement by, the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions and the Executive Committee, UNHCR moved to two new categories of posts, namely programme delivery and administrative support posts. During 1999, UNHCR plans to engage in an exercise to redefine and re-categorize its posts in order to establish congruence with the categories used by UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA. The new categorization, already approved by the Executive Committee and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions, creates three categories of posts within UNHCR, namely, programme, programme support and management and administration. At the time of preparation of the present section of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000–2001, UNHCR had not completed categorization of all of its posts. As a result, UNHCR conveyed to the Secretariat that the regular budget resources to be proposed under this section should be kept, for the time being, at the same level as in the biennium 1998–1999.

23.17 A review of the funding of UNHCR from the regular budget will take place in the near future on the basis of the outcome of the new categorization of posts in UNHCR, the evolution of UNHCR requirements and the desirability of streamlining and simplifying the budgetary process. The outcome of this review will be submitted to the General Assembly through the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

Posts

23.18 The estimated amount of $42,222,600 would provide for continuation of 89 posts in the Professional category and above (1 USG, 1 ASG, 2 D-2, 10 D-1, 19 P-5, 41 P-4/3 and 15 P-2/1) and 131 General Service (4 Principal level and 127 Other level posts).

Other staff costs

23.19 A provision of $1,757,200 would cover general temporary assistance requirements, utilized on a flexible basis to secure personnel when the need exists to enhance delivery of services.

General operating expenses

23.20 The requirements of $993,900 would provide for the United Nations regular budget component of UNHCR headquarters expenditures for rent and maintenance, utilities, communications and insurance at the Montbrillant Building.

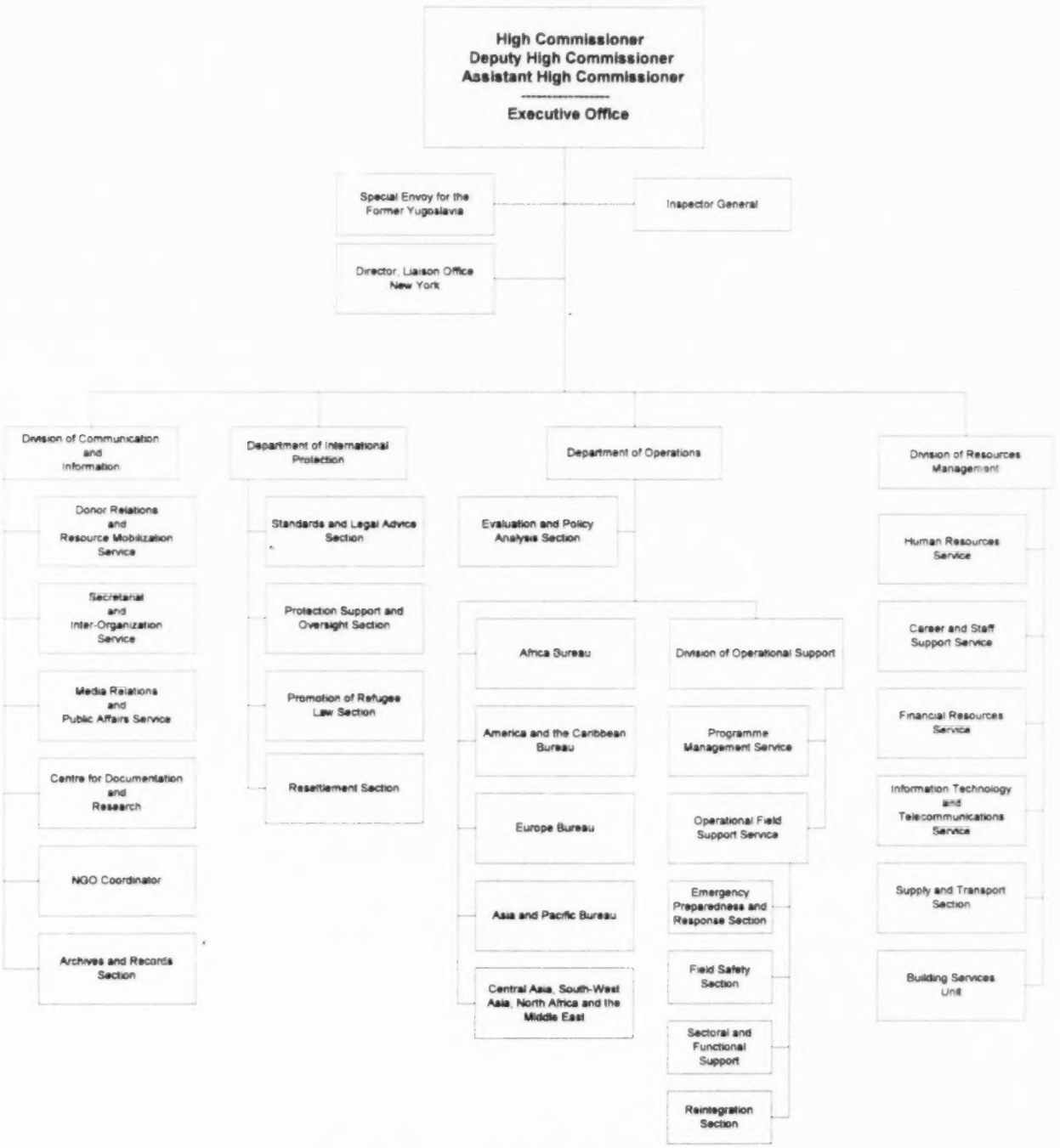
Supplies and materials

23.21 The amount of $77,300 would cover the United Nations regular budget contribution to UNHCR expenditures for supplies and materials.

Table 23.4 **Summary of follow-up action taken to implement relevant recommendations of the internal and external oversight bodies and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions**

Brief description of the recommendation	*Action taken to implement the recommendation*
Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/52/7 (Chap. II, Part VI))	
The Advisory Committee noted that the funding of UNHCR from the regular budget may be reviewed in the future to determine whether other budgetary arrangements, such as a lump sum grant, would be administratively more effective. It was the view of the Advisory Committee that, in the future, whatever arrangement is adopted, the regular budget should continue to fund conference servicing of the Executive Committee (para. VI.15).	The arrangements followed for the biennium 1998–1999 are recommended for continuation in the biennium 2000–2001. Should revisions to those be contemplated in the future the recommendation regarding regular budget financing of the conference servicing of the Executive Committee will be taken fully into account.
General Assembly (resolution 52/220)	
Requested the Secretary-General to monitor the flow of extrabudgetary resources to the Office of the High Commissioner and, based on his findings, to review the funding of the Office from the regular budget above the current proposed level (sect. III, para. 82).	See paragraph 23.17 above.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Proposed organizational structure for the biennium 2000-2001


High Commissioner
Deputy High Commissioner
Assistant High Commissioner
Executive Office
Special Envoy for the Former Yugoslavia
Inspector General
Director, Liaison Office New York
Division of Communication and Information
Donor Relations and Resource Mobilization Service
Secretariat and Inter-Organization Service
Media Relations and Public Affairs Service
Centre for Documentation and Research
NGO Coordinator
Archives and Records Section
Department of International Protection
Standards and Legal Advice Section
Protection Support and Oversight Section
Promotion of Refugee Law Section
Resettlement Section
Department of Operations
Evaluation and Policy Analysis Section
Africa Bureau
America and the Caribbean Bureau
Europe Bureau
Asia and Pacific Bureau
Central Asia, South-West Asia, North Africa and the Middle East
Division of Operational Support
Programme Management Service
Operational Field Support Service
Emergency Preparedness and Response Section
Field Safety Section
Sectoral and Functional Support
Reintegration Section
Division of Resources Management
Human Resources Service
Career and Staff Support Service
Financial Resources Service
Information Technology and Telecommunications Service
Supply and Transport Section
Building Services Unit